

## **Lesson Plan: A Directory of Fairfax County Service Providers**

This lesson is designed to make students more familiar with the wide range of services provided to citizens by the Fairfax County government and the accessibility of those services.

### **Connection to POS: Standards 8.3**

- ◆ *Students will describe how governments provide public goods and services.... (8.3.1.b.)*

### **SOL Standards: 7.2.c, 7.7.a**



### **Objectives**

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- ◆ depict the location, duties, and hours of operations of a variety of county service providers.
- ◆ identify and analyze the kinds of programs and services performed by local government.



### **Materials**

- ◆ card stock
- ◆ markers
- ◆ *Fairfax County Citizens Handbook* (<http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/handbook/main.htm>)
- ◆ list of Fairfax County service providers



### **Time Needed**

- ◆ This activity could be researched in a computer lab during a 45-minute period and completed in the classroom during a 90-minute block or 45 minute period with homework assigned.



## **Procedures**

1. Provide the attached list of county services and locations connected with the Fairfax County government to each student.
2. In groups, students should rank order these services from most important to least important. Next, select 10 that the group feels are vital and 5 that seem relatively unimportant (advise students that schools should not show up on this list!) After groups have come to a consensus, discuss the rankings as a class. Are there items that continually showed up as important? unimportant? If not, what could account for the differences in each group's list?
3. Working in these same groups, students will be assigned 3-5 services to research. When all of the groups have completed their research, the class will compile a Community Services Directory. Information that must be included in each entry:
  - Name of service/office/agency
  - Contact phone #
  - Hours of operation
  - Address and/or location and a web address if available
  - A brief summary of the service performed by the office or agencyTeachers may want to create a model entry for a service that is not included on the list that students will be able to use as a reference for their own work.
4. One student in each group should be given the responsibility of drafting a cover for the directory. It must be neat, attractive, and give some insight into what life in Fairfax County is like. At the end of the activity, the class will vote on which cover should be placed on the directory.
5. After the class directory is assembled, the teacher can share several copies of the Fairfax County *Citizen's Handbook* and students can compare their results with an actual county publication.



## **Assessment**

- ◆ The teacher may wish to have the students complete the enclosed cooperative group report form for this activity. Additionally, the students should self-assess their group's entries for the following:
  - Completion
  - Neatness
  - Accuracy as compared to the actual handbook
- ◆ Students should complete an exit slip for the teacher's review that lists the county service they felt most important to the success and well-being of the community and explain their reasoning.



### **Extensions**

- ◆ Representatives from several of these offices/agencies might be asked to come take part in a panel discussion in the classroom on the quality of life in Fairfax County and the importance of those services which the government provides.



### **Differentiations**

- ◆ Visual and tactile learners might benefit from actually mapping the location of the service providers relative to the location of their school or home. They could use the research generated by their classmates to make a hand-drawn map that illustrates the location of their home/school, major roads, and the location of each of the services being researched by the other groups. Separate groups could complete this activity, or it could become the responsibility of one member of each group.



### **Interdisciplinary Connections**

- ◆ This activity would serve as a strong reinforcement for an English unit on informational or how-to writing.
- ◆ Have students evaluate services and agencies that they run across when researching the services that the county government provides. What types of skills, coursework, etc. would be necessary for such a career? Have a follow-up team activity where each core teacher on the team conducts break-out sessions or workshops on training, classes, etc. that would relate to their discipline.
- ◆ Ask the science teacher on your team to lead the students in an investigation of the following questions:
  1. How are energy needs met in our community?
  2. Are there any environmental challenges that the county government must help our community handle?